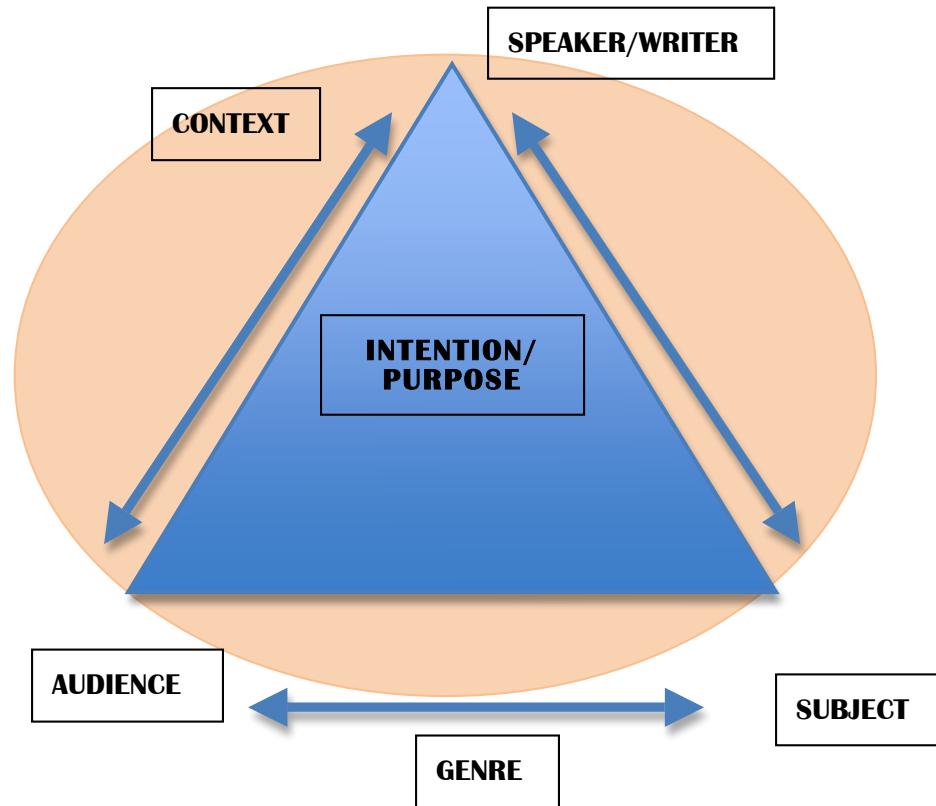


## Analyzing & Creating a Text: What to CONSIDER

**Step 1: Determine the Rhetorical Situation by answering questions about the Rhetorical Triangle.**



Speaker/Writer:

- What do you know about him/her? (Find out from the text or from research)
- Is he or she credible? Why?
- Does he or she have any biases or prejudices? What are they? What might they be?

Subject:

- What is the topic/subject? Be specific.
- Must be "open"—offer at least two paths of argument (Not settled as fact or too controversial)
- What have others said about this subject?
- What type of evidence or proof will best develop the speaker's position?

Audience:

- Who is the target audience? (Hint: Not "everyone" or "us". Be specific.)
- What does the audience already know or believe about the subject and/or speaker?
- What are the expectations of the audience?

Context:

- What outside knowledge does the reader need to bring to the text to fully understand it?
  - Cultural memories, cultural events or controversies, recent events
- What is going on in the time, place, culture, etc. of the speech/paper? Allusions.
- Adds power to a rhetorical piece, but can confuse an audience member who doesn't know the references.

Purpose/Intention:

- What is the Aim or Purpose of the text? Is it a Call to Action, and for what? To Inform? Etc.
- What does the speaker/writer want to happen as a result of text?

Genre:

- What is the form of the text? (Fiction/Nonfiction? Letter, journal entry, speech, brochure, report, essay...)
- What is the mode of the text? (Persuasive/Argumentative, Compare & Contrast, Cause & Effect, Narrative, Expository, Analytical, Definition...)

## Analyzing & Creating a Text: What to CONSIDER

### RHETORIC: An author's TOOLBOX

- The specific features/elements of texts that cause them to be meaningful, purposeful, and effective for the audience.
- The CHOICES an author makes in creating a text.
- MAKING CHOICES/MASKING OTHERS

### RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

- The art of noticing and commenting on (Analyzing) all the choices an author makes.
- DECIDE: Is the text effective? OR why is the text effective?
- Exposing choices/omissions and Judging effectiveness.

Here is a good way to think about rhetorical analysis...

In *Dancing in the Dark*, Toni Morrison says, "Texts are like fishbowls: our attention is drawn past the surface so that we see the fish."

If we are to critique an author's rhetoric, then, we must notice the bowl itself—the normally invisible surface that makes the whole thing possible. As rhetorical critics, we have to become aware of the subtle, normally invisible moves the author makes, like aspiring athletes, dancers, and musicians study the moves of the masters. We must reveal these moves so that we can determine the effectiveness of the author's efforts. We must give names to the techniques and tactics that writers take pains to hide. Otherwise, we see nothing but a blur of expert performance, and our analysis is useless.



Don't Be like  
This Cat!



We Usually look at the "Fish" of  
the text:

- Content
- Characters
- Plot
- Subject
- WHAT is being said.

THIS IS IMPORTANT, but...

We ALSO Need To turn our  
attention to look at the "Bowl" of  
the text:

- The Language, Style, and structure choices an author makes
- HOW is the text written?
- WHY is the Text written that way?



## Analyzing & Creating a Text: What to CONSIDER

### Step 2: Analyze Writing Style (Literary & Rhetorical Devices/Strategies)

Once you have determined the elements of the rhetorical situation, then IDENTIFY the Literary or Rhetorical Devices/Strategies the author uses to meet his/her purpose. Later, you will consider WHY and HOW the author uses them.

#### Rhetorical Analysis of Narratives/Stories

#### Literary Techniques & Literary Devices (some basics) to consider:

##### Sequence/Plot

- Chronological Order
- Flashback
- Foreshadowing
- Conflict

##### Setting

##### Theme

##### Narrator

##### Point of View

- First Person
- Second Person
- Third Person
- Omniscient
- Limited

##### Characters

- Dialogue
- Flat/Round
- Static/

##### Language

- Literal
- Figurative
  - Imagery
  - Simile
  - Metaphor
  - Hyperbole
  - Personification
  - Oxymoron
- Diction
  - Denotation
  - Connotation
- Tone
- Allusions
- Syntax

##### Sound

- Onomatopoeia
- Rhyme
- Rhythm
- Alliteration

## Analyzing & Creating a Text: What to CONSIDER

### Step 2 CONTINUED : Analyze Writing Style

#### Rhetorical Analysis of an Argument/Expository Text

Appeals\*: How is the author achieving his/her goals? (Analyzing language)

Ethos/Credibility: The author is credible and believable and presents an image to sell his/her point.

An author establishes credibility by:

- being an expert or referencing an expert
- using the appropriate tone/grammar/structure
- using FACTS and CITING them
- creating & presenting an appropriate PERSONA
- 

Logos/Appeal to Logic: The author uses logical, reasonable arguments to prove his/her point.

- Has an argument/claim (a.k.a. a thesis)
- Facts, Statistics, and Quotes from reputable sources
- Analogies
- Case Studies
- Providing a Counterargument & a Rebuttal of that Counterargument
- Logical Progression of Ideas
- Deductive Reasoning: Begins with a general statement then presents specific supporting evidence.
- Inductive Reasoning: Begins with specific evidence and ends with conclusions drawn from the evidence.
- Watch out for FAULTY LOGIC: perhaps a person is making faulty assumptions, pretending something is logical that isn't, or is flat-out illogical.

Pathos: The author fosters emotional reactions in the audience to support his/her purpose.

- Diction: "Loaded" words or images (those with a lot of connotation)
- Repetition of words, phrases, or images (including parallelism of sentences)
- Tone
- Rhetorical Questions
- Establishing Rapport (connection) with audience
- Anecdotes (Personal or illustrative)
- Allusions
- Figurative Language
  - Metaphors/Similes
  - Oxymorons
  - Hyperbole
- Testimonials (Celebrity, "Average Joe")
- Peer Pressure (Everyone is doing it...)

\*Note: These appeals work in conjunction. An argument should not solely rely on any ONE of these appeals—particularly not Pathos.

Step 3: Effectiveness Combine Steps 1 and 2 to decide:

How effective was the text/argument? Why?

How did the speaker use literary or rhetorical strategies and devices to achieve his/her goal or purpose?